

Message Text

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61

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SUBJ: NARCOTICS: TRAINING FOR DAS AGENTS

REF: A. STATE 177157, B. BOGOTA 4834, C. BOGOTA 6597

SUMMARY: WHILE WE CONTINUE TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT HISTORICALLY UNSTABLE PERSONNEL POLICIES IN DAS, WE NOTE THAT DAS NARCOTICS UNIT HAS UNDERGONE NO RPT NO SHAKE-UPS FOR MORE THAN SIX MONTHS, AND IS IMPROVING ITS PERFORMANCE UNDER EXPERIENCED LEADERSHIP. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DAS IS CONSIDERING ADDING UP TO 50 NEW NARCOTICS AGENTS AND BEEFING-UP ITS DRUG ENFORCEMENT COVERAGE ON THE NORTH COAST. WITH OPERATION KITCHEN STILL IN THE OFFING, A NEW DAS CHIEF STILL BEGINNING TO GET A HANDLE ON HIS NEW JOB AND NEW NARCO UNIT OPERATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING STILL UNDERWAY, WE WOULD PREFER TO DELAY CONSIDERATION OF DAS TRAINING REQUEST UNTIL FY-77. FOLLOWING ADDRESSES QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL A REGARDING DAS NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT EXPANSION PLANS, OPERATION FUNNEL AND DAS TRAINING NEEDS. END SUMMARY.

1. THOUGH THE CENTRAL DAS NARCOTICS UNIT BASED IN BOGOTA HAS UNDERGONE NO RPT NO MAJOR PERSONNEL SHIFTS FOR SIX MONTHS OR MORE, WE ARE MINDFUL OF THE HISTORICALLY UNSTABLE PERSONNEL ENVIRONMENT IN KEY ENFORCEMENT AGENCY. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, FORMER

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DAS CHIEF GENERAL MATAALLANA FIRED FOR INCOMPETENCE OR CORRUPTION

ABOUT HALF OF THE 3000 DAS AGENTS ON THE ROLLS WHEN HE TOOK OVER THAT AGENCY IN AUGUST 1974. CONVERSELY, IN HIS NEARLY TWO MONTHS IN OFFICE, NEW DAS CHIEF DR. GUILLERMO LEON HAS MADE FEW PERSONNEL SHIFTS. FORMER DAS NARCO UNIT COMMANDER JAIME ESLAVA MOVED UP TO BECOME LEON'S STAFF AID. AS SUCH HE RETAINS EXECUTIVE SUPERVISION OF THE DAS NARCO UNIT, WHOSE CHIEF REPORTS TO LEON THROUGH ESLAVA. IN TURN, FORMER NARCO UNIT DEPUTY COMMANDER LT. ALFARO WAS PROMOTED TO HEAD THE UNIT. THERE HAVE BEEN NO OTHER CHANGES IN NARCO UNIT PERSONNEL.

2. ALFARO RECENTLY INFORMED DEA-BOGOTA THAT HE IS RECOMMENDING THE ADDITION OF 50 AGENTS TO HIS PRESENT 70-MAN NARCOTICS FORCE. THE DRAFT PLAN, NOW BEING CONSIDERED BY DAS CHIEF LEON, ALSO INCLUDES THE CREATION OF A SPECIALIZED DRUG ENFORCEMENT SUB-UNIT IN BARRANQUILLA TO COVER THE KEY NORTH COAST REGION. ALFARO PROMISED TO PRESENT THIS PLAN TO US FOLLOWING APPROVAL BY LEON. IN TURN, WE HAVE TOLD ALFARO THAT WE CAN CONSIDER NO NEW ADDITIONAL AGENT TRAINING OR EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE UNTIL WE HAVE STUDIED AND DISCUSSED IN DETAIL WITH HIM NEW DAS OPERATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PROPOSALS. THERE THE MATTER RESTS.

3. WITH REGARD TO 120 DAS AGENTS WE HAVE TRAINED IN DRUG ENFORCEMENT, ALL BUT ABOUT 20 OF THEM ARE STILL ON BOARD. SEVENTY OF THESE AGENTS ARE ASSIGNED TO ALFARO'S CENTRAL NARCO UNIT IN BOGOTA. TWENTY-FIVE TO 30 OTHERS ARE WORKING NARCOTICS PART-TIME IN PROVINCIAL CITIES, OR AS PART OF COMBINED CUSTOMS, F-2 AND DAS NARCOTICS UNITS AT MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS. ONE GROUP OF THESE DETACHED OPERATIVES RECENTLY PARTICIPATED IN THE SEIZURE IN BUCARAMANGA OF MORE THAN 100 KILOS OF COCAINE HYDROCHLORIDE AND A CLANDESTINE LABORATORY. (BOGOTA 2201).

4. WITH SPECIFIC REGARD TO OPERATION FUNNEL, ALL DAS AGENTS ASSIGNED TO THAT EXERCISE ARE US-TRAINED NARCOTICS SPECIALISTS. THE ONLY ADDITIONAL TRAINING THEY WILL NEED INVOLVES VEHICLE SEARCH TECHNIQUES. THIS WILL BE PROVIDED BY AID-COLOMBIAN NARCOTICS ADVISORS, LOPEZ AND HOLGUIN. WE ESTIMATE THAT EIGHT TO 10 HOURS OF CLASS-ROOM AND PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION WILL SUFFICE FOR THIS PURPOSE.

5. POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF CCINC-FUNDED TRAINING IN-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNTRY WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT DAS MOTIVATION IN OPERATION FUNNEL. THEREFORE, WE CAN SAFELY DELAY CONSIDERATION OF THEIR TRAINING REQUEST UNTIL FUNNEL (ASSUMING IT BEGINS SHORTLY) GETS UNDERWAY AND WE HAVE STUDIED NEW OPERATIONAL AND ORGANIZATION PLANS WE EXPECT TO GET FROM DAS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ASSUMING THAT THE DAS TRACK RECORD CONTINUES TO IMPROVE DURING FUNNEL, THAT ITS PERSONNEL STRUCTURE REMAINS RELATIVELY STABLE AND THAT WE GET A RATIONAL PLAN FOR EXPANDED DRUG OPERATIONS, WE COULD RE-

CONSIDER THE DAS TRAINING PROPOSAL IN EARLY FY-77.

6. IN SUM AND AS WE NOTED IN BOGOTA 4300, WE ARE MAINTAINING A WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE TOWARD ANY NEW TRAINING OR MATERIAL ASSISTANCE FOR DAS. WE HAVE, HOWEVER, NOTED DEFINATE IMPROVEMENT IN THE DAS ENFORCEMENT RECORD UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF NARCO SPECIALISTS ESLAVA AND ALFARO. DAS ALSO CONTINUES TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH US IN THE EXPULSION OF US-CITIZEN NARCOTICS FUGITIVES FOUND IN COLOMBIA. WITH NEW DAS CHIEF LEON APPARENTLY TAKING A CLOSE INTEREST IN DRUG ENFORCEMENT, UP-GRADING THE STATUS OF THE DAS NARCO UNIT BY PLACING IT UNDER COMMAND OF HIS OFFICE, AND SO FAR REFRAINING FROM MAKING MAJOR PERSONNEL SHIFTS IN THAT UNIT, WE ARE MILDLY OPTIMISTIC. OPERATION FUNNEL RESULTS WILL OBVIOUSLY GIVE US A BETTER IDEA OF JUST HOW GOOD THE DAS NARCO UNIT HAS BECOME. WE WILL ALSO WANT ADDITIONAL TIME TO STUDY THE ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF DAS CHIEF LEON AND THE NEW TOP DAS LEADERSHIP HE MAY APPOINT BEFORE GRANTING NEW NARCOTICS CONTROL ASSISTANCE TO THAT AGENCY.
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